

## Defend the base

### *Security forces rely on Wolf Pack to support first mission*

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“Defend the Base, Accept Follow-on Forces, Take the Fight North.” Our clear and concisely stated mission, one we train and exercise very hard to get right.

Most of us are focused on one element of our wing mission and do it very well. But, when it comes to the first part, defend the base, we rely on support from the entire Wolf Pack. This support comes with a price. It takes skilled members away from their primary tasks. It’s not an easy call to send a jet engine mechanic or a bomb builder to a defensive fighting position, but during the first few days of hostilities, before augmentation forces arrive, we’ll have no choice.

As the Wolf has said many times, if we don’t do the first part of our mission successfully, if the bad guys are eating our chow, sleeping in our beds, and playing our stereotypes, we won’t be delivering our lethal firepower north.

Next week the eyes of the Inspector General will be upon us. Our past few months of training and exercising tested us to the max. We did the ultimate “more with less” and the going was very tough on the troops. The conditions were rough and motivation suffered. As we moved into February’s exercise, our dress rehearsal for the IG, there were some critical questions that I needed answers to. What I really needed to know was ... “Where is the ‘hooah’ in defend the base?”

Where would we find the spirit and focus to fight the fight under any and all conditions? What level of pain were we ready to sustain to prove we could really execute our first mission? What

mission degradation would we feel as the temperature dropped and people fatigued? Would strong character and mental toughness get us through the first five days of the war/exercise? Would good leadership prevail? Who would step up to the plate when the going got tough and say, “You can count on me”? Who would have the guts to dig deep and the fortitude to do so again and again? Who would perform? Would we be ready?

The answer came with great relief and personal gratitude. Where is the “hooah” in defend the base? The answer is, it’s right here! Wolf Pack warriors proved it with our 303 Wolf Pack security forces and ready defenders! When we say “hooah,” they don’t say, “Who me?” They say, “You and me.” One team, one fight! With courage and relentless spirit, they put the bite in “May God have Mercy on the Wolf Pack’s Prey.” They are the wolf’s howl that warns of their hunger for enemy coyotes!

Commanders, first sergeants and supervisors know who I’m talking about – Kunsan’s finest. These awesome troops from every squadron in our wing dug in on day one, lived in defensive fighting positions or in Humvee’s and sucked rubber for six days without relief. They posted cordons, provided entry control, laid concertina wire, employed heavy weapons, fortified fighting positions and detected and crushed enemy coyotes.

They lived in their positions with a kerosene heater, a box of Meals, Ready to Eat, a sleeping bag and their weapon. They focused on the fight under austere conditions.

No one escaped learning. Warriors



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Morrison, 8th CS/VI

**Staff Sgt. Robert Boyd, 8th Medical Group, prepares concertina wire around a defense fighting position before a combat readiness exercise here.**

learned several things like how to survive, how important it is to be prepared, that paying attention to detail and taking responsibility may mean the difference in running out of kerosene or getting a timely replenishment, to be responsible for a piece of terrain and knowing every living soul that lies behind it is counting on you. But, most of all they learned about personal strength and teamwork.

A post visit, cookie patrol, hot chocolate and hot soup delivered by first sergeants and Wolf Chief, and a supply delivery from security forces supply personnel ranked high on the list of things most desired. Of course, a hot shower and a good four to six hours of uninterrupted sleep were at the top of the list. But, let there be no doubt, at the very top of the list was hearing Lee Greenwood sing “God Bless the USA,” and ENDEX.

Greenwood stole the show! To be honest, he steals the show for me every time – but this time for new reason and with new meaning. As I listened to the words, I thought of our 303 Wolf Pack defenders and our many selective arm (SELARM) personnel. I felt so proud to serve with them. Defenders, I would, “...gladly stand up next to you and defend her still today, cause their ain’t no doubt I love this land, God bless the USA.”

What an awesome team of dedicated men and women. Let’s show the Inspector General what we’re made of. As we take up our fighting positions next week, there is no need for me to ask, “Where is the hooah?” in defend the base. I already know – it’s right here!

Who me? You bet. You and me – one team, one fight.



File photos

**Airmen from the 8th Security Forces Squadron stand locked and ready to defend Kunsan Air Base during a combat readiness exercise here. Kunsan will be put to the test during Pacific Air Forces Inspector General Operational Readiness Inspection here March 14-19.**